

“(11) The number of cases appealed to the United States Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit.

“(12) The number and status of appeals and petitions pending with the Court and of applications described in paragraph (3) as of the end of such fiscal year.

“(13) The number of cases pending with the Court more than 18 months as of the end of such fiscal year.

“(14) A summary of any service performed for the Court by a recalled retired judge of the Court.

“(15) An assessment of the workload of each judge of the Court, including consideration of the following:

“(A) The time required of each judge for disposition of each type of case.

“(B) The number of cases reviewed by the Court.

“(C) The average workload of other Federal judges.

“(C) APPROPRIATE COMMITTEES OF CONGRESS DEFINED.—In this section, the term ‘appropriate committees of Congress’ means—

“(1) the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the Senate; and

“(2) the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the House of Representatives.”.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections at the beginning of chapter 72 is amended by inserting after the item related to section 7287 the following new item:

“7288. Annual report.”.

TITLE V—INSURANCE MATTERS

SEC. 501. REPORT ON INCLUSION OF SEVERE AND ACUTE POST TRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER AMONG CONDITIONS COVERED BY TRAUMATIC INJURY PROTECTION COVERAGE UNDER SERVICEMEMBERS’ GROUP LIFE INSURANCE.

(a) REPORT REQUIRED.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall, in consultation with the Secretary of Defense, submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report setting forth the assessment of the Secretary of Veterans Affairs as to the feasibility and advisability of including severe and acute Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) among the conditions covered by traumatic injury protection coverage under Servicemembers’ Group Life Insurance under section 1980A of title 38, United States Code.

(b) CONSIDERATIONS.—In preparing the assessment required by subsection (a), the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall consider the following:

(1) The advisability of providing traumatic injury protection coverage under Servicemembers’ Group Life Insurance under section 1980A of title 38, United States Code, for Post Traumatic Stress Disorder incurred by a member of the Armed Forces as a direct result of military service in a combat zone that renders the member unable to carry out the daily activities of living after the member is discharged or released from military service.

(2) The unique circumstances of military service, and the unique experiences of members of the Armed Forces who are deployed to a combat zone.

(3) Any financial strain incurred by family members of members of the Armed Forces who suffer severe and acute from Post Traumatic Stress Disorder.

(4) The recovery time, and any particular difficulty of the recovery process, for recovery from severe and acute Post Traumatic Stress Disorder.

(5) Such other matters as the Secretary considers appropriate.

(c) APPROPRIATE COMMITTEES OF CONGRESS DEFINED.—In this section, the term ‘appropriate committees of Congress’ means—

(1) the Committee on Armed Services and the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the Senate; and

(2) the Committee on Armed Services and the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the House of Representatives.

SEC. 502. TREATMENT OF STILLBORN CHILDREN AS INSURABLE DEPENDENTS UNDER SERVICEMEMBERS’ GROUP LIFE INSURANCE.

(a) TREATMENT.—Section 1965(10) is amended by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

“(C) The member’s stillborn child.”.

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Section 101(4)(A) is amended by striking “section 1965(10)(B)” in the matter preceding clause (i) and inserting “subparagraph (B) or (C) of section 1965(10)”.

SEC. 503. OTHER ENHANCEMENTS OF SERVICEMEMBERS’ GROUP LIFE INSURANCE COVERAGE.

(a) EXPANSION OF SERVICEMEMBERS’ GROUP LIFE INSURANCE TO INCLUDE CERTAIN MEMBERS OF INDIVIDUAL READY RESERVE.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 1967(a)(1)(C) is amended by striking “section 1965(5)(B) of this title” and inserting “subparagraph (B) or (C) of section 1965(5) of this title”.

(2) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—

(A) Section 1967(a)(5)(C) is amended by striking “section 1965(5)(B) of this title” and inserting “subparagraph (B) or (C) of section 1965(5) of this title”; and

(B) Section 1969(g)(1)(B) is amended by striking “section 1965(5)(B) of this title” and inserting “subparagraph (B) or (C) of section 1965(5) of this title”.

(b) REDUCTION IN PERIOD OF DEPENDENTS’ COVERAGE AFTER MEMBER SEPARATES.—Section 1968(a)(5)(B)(ii) is amended by striking “120 days after”.

(c) AUTHORITY TO SET PREMIUMS FOR READY RESERVISTS’ SPOUSES.—Section 1969(g)(1)(B) is amended by striking “(which shall be the same for all such members)”.

(d) FORFEITURE OF VETERANS’ GROUP LIFE INSURANCE.—Section 1973 is amended by striking “under this subchapter” and inserting “and Veterans’ Group Life Insurance under this subchapter”.

(e) EFFECTIVE AND APPLICABILITY DATES.—

(1) The amendments made by subsection (a) shall take effect on the date of the enactment of this Act.

(2) The amendment made by subsection (b) shall apply with respect to Servicemembers’ Group Life Insurance coverage for an insurable dependent of a member, as defined in section 1965(10) of title 38, United States Code (as amended by section 502 of this Act), that begins on or after the date of the enactment of this Act.

(3) The amendment made by subsection (c) shall take effect as if enacted on June 5, 2001, immediately after the enactment of the Veterans’ Survivor Benefits Improvements Act of 2001 (Public Law 107-14; 115 Stat. 25).

(4) The amendment made by subsection (d) shall apply with respect to any act of mutiny, treason, spying, or desertion committed on or after the date of the enactment of this Act for which a person is found guilty, or with respect to refusal because of conscientious objections to perform service in, or to wear the uniform of, the Armed Forces on or after the date of the enactment of this Act.

TITLE VI—OTHER MATTERS

SEC. 601. AUTHORITY FOR SUSPENSION OR TERMINATION OF CLAIMS OF THE UNITED STATES AGAINST INDIVIDUALS WHO DIED WHILE SERVING ON ACTIVE DUTY IN THE ARMED FORCES.

(a) AUTHORITY.—Section 3711(f) of title 31, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by redesignating paragraph (3) as paragraph (4); and

(2) by inserting after paragraph (2) the following new paragraph (3):

“(3) The Secretary of Veterans Affairs may suspend or terminate an action by the Secretary under subsection (a) to collect a claim against the estate of a person who died while serving on active duty as a member of the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, or Coast Guard during a period when the Coast Guard is operating as a service in the Navy if the Secretary determines that, under the circumstances applicable with respect to the deceased person, it is appropriate to do so.”.

(b) EQUITABLE REFUND OF AMOUNTS COLLECTED.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs may refund to the estate of such person any amount collected by the Secretary (whether before, on, or after the date of the enactment of this Act) from a person who died while serving on active duty as a member of the Armed Forces if the Secretary determines that, under the circumstances applicable with respect to the deceased person, it is appropriate to do so.

SEC. 602. MEMORIAL HEADSTONES AND MARKERS FOR DECEASED REMARRIED SURVIVING SPOUSES OF VETERANS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 2306(b)(4)(B) is amended by striking “an unremarried surviving spouse whose subsequent remarriage was terminated by death or divorce” and inserting “a surviving spouse who had a subsequent remarriage”.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made by this section shall apply to deaths occurring on or after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 603. THREE-YEAR EXTENSION OF AUTHORITY TO CARRY OUT INCOME VERIFICATION.

Section 5317(g) is amended by striking “September 30, 2008” and inserting “September 30, 2011”.

SEC. 604. THREE-YEAR EXTENSION OF TEMPORARY AUTHORITY FOR THE PERFORMANCE OF MEDICAL DISABILITY EXAMINATIONS BY CONTRACT PHYSICIANS.

Section 704(c) of the Veterans Benefits Act of 2003 (Public Law 108-183; 117 Stat. 2651; 38 U.S.C. 5101 note) is amended by striking “December 31, 2009” and inserting “December 31, 2012”.

The title was amended so as to read:

A Bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to improve and enhance compensation and pension, housing, labor and education, and insurance benefits for veterans, and for other purposes.

CONGRATULATING LATVIA ON 90TH ANNIVERSARY OF DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Foreign Relations be discharged from further consideration of S. Con. Res. 87, and that the Senate then proceed to its immediate consideration.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered. The clerk will report the concurrent resolution by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A concurrent resolution (S. Con. Res. 87) congratulating the Republic of Latvia on the 90th anniversary of its declaration of independence.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the concurrent resolution.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, I further ask unanimous consent that the concurrent resolution be agreed to, the

preamble be agreed to, the motions to reconsider be laid upon the table, with no intervening action or debate, and any statements relating to the measure be printed in the RECORD.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The concurrent resolution (S. Con. Res. 87) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

The concurrent resolution, with its preamble, reads as follows:

S. CON. RES. 87

Whereas, on November 18, 1918, in the City of Riga, the members of the People's Council proclaimed Latvia a free, democratic, and sovereign nation;

Whereas, on July 24, 1922, the United States formally recognized Latvia as an independent and sovereign nation;

Whereas Latvia existed for 21 years as an independent and sovereign nation and a fully recognized member of the League of Nations;

Whereas Latvia maintained friendly and stable relations with its neighbors, including the Soviet Union, during its independence, without any border disputes;

Whereas Latvia concluded several peace treaties and protocols with the Soviet Union, including a peace treaty signed on August 11, 1920, under which the Soviet Union "unreservedly recognize[d] the independence and sovereignty of the Latvian State and forever renounce[d] all sovereign rights . . . over the Latvian people and territory";

Whereas, despite friendly and mutually productive relations between Latvia and the Soviet Union, on August 23, 1939, Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union signed the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact, which contained a secret protocol assigning Latvia, Estonia, and Lithuania to the Soviet sphere of influence;

Whereas, under the cover of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact, on June 17, 1940, Latvia, Estonia, and Lithuania were forcibly incorporated into the Soviet Union in violation of pre-existing peace treaties;

Whereas the Soviet Union imposed upon the people of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania a communist political system that stifled civil dissent, free political expression, and basic human rights;

Whereas the United States never recognized this illegal and forcible occupation, and successive United States presidents maintained continuous diplomatic relations with these countries throughout the Soviet occupation, never accepting them to be "Soviet Republics";

Whereas, during the 50 years of Soviet occupation of the Baltic states, Congress strongly, consistently, and on a bipartisan basis supported a United States policy of legal non-recognition;

Whereas, in 1953, the congressionally-established Kersten Commission investigated the incorporation of Latvia, Estonia, and Lithuania into the Soviet Union and determined that the Soviet Union had illegally and forcibly occupied and annexed the Baltic countries;

Whereas, in 1982, and for the next nine years until the Baltic countries regained their independence, Congress annually adopted a Baltic Freedom Day resolution denouncing the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact and appealing for the freedom of the Baltic countries;

Whereas, in 1991, Latvia, Estonia, and Lithuania regained their de facto independence and were quickly recognized by the United States and by almost every other country in the world, including the Soviet Union;

Whereas, in 1998, the United States and the three Baltic nations signed the U.S.-Baltic Charter of Partnership, an expression of the importance of the Baltic Sea region to United States interests;

Whereas the 109th Congress resolved (S. Con. Res. 35 and H. Res. 28) that "it is the sense of Congress that the Government of the Russian Federation should issue a clear and unambiguous statement of admission and condemnation of the illegal occupation and annexation by the Soviet Union from 1940 to 1991 of the Baltic countries of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, the consequences of which will be a significant increase in good will among the affected people";

Whereas Latvia has successfully developed as a free and democratic country, ensured the rule of law, and developed a free market economy;

Whereas the Government of Latvia has constantly pursued a course of integration of that country into the community of free and democratic nations, becoming a full and responsible member of the United Nations, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, the European Union, and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization;

Whereas the people of Latvia cherish the principles of political freedom, human rights, and independence; and

Whereas Latvia is a strong and loyal ally of the United States, and the people of Latvia share common values with the people of the United States: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate (the House of Representatives concurring), That Congress—

(1) congratulates the people of Latvia on the occasion of the 90th anniversary of that country's November 18, 1918, declaration of independence;

(2) commends the Government of Latvia for its success in implementing political and economic reforms, for establishing political, religious and economic freedom, and for its strong commitment to human and civil rights;

(3) recognizes the common goals and shared values of the people of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania, the close and friendly relations and ties of the three Baltic countries with one other, and their tragic history in the last century under the Nazi and Soviet occupations;

(4) calls on the President to issue a proclamation congratulating the people of Latvia on the 90th anniversary of the declaration of Latvia's independence on November 18, 1918;

(5) respectfully requests the President to congratulate the Government of Latvia for its commitment to democracy, a free market economy, human rights, the rule of law, participation in a wide range of international structures, and security cooperation with the United States Government; and

(6) calls on the President and Secretary of State to urge the Government of the Russian Federation to acknowledge that the Soviet occupation of Latvia, Estonia, and Lithuania under the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact and for the succeeding 51 years was illegal.

SIGNING AUTHORITY—S. 3406

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Senator HARKIN be authorized to sign the duly enrolled copy of S. 3406, a bill to restore the intent and protections of the Americans With Disabilities Act of 1990.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

ORDERS FOR WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 17, 2008

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it stand adjourned until 9:30 a.m. tomorrow, Wednesday, September 17; that following the prayer and pledge, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, the morning hour be deemed expired, the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day, and the Senate proceed to a period of morning business for up to 1 hour, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each, with the time equally divided and controlled between the two leaders or their designees, with the majority controlling the first half and the Republicans controlling the second half; that following morning business, the Senate resume consideration of S. 3001, the National Defense Authorization Act; further, that all time in adjournment, recess, and morning business count postcloture.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

PROGRAM

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, cloture was invoked this afternoon and the managers of the bill continue to work through filed amendments. We expect to complete action on the Defense authorization bill during tomorrow's session and rollcall votes are possible throughout the day.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 9:30 A.M. TOMORROW

Mr. LEVIN. If there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that it stand adjourned under the previous order.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 6:51 p.m., adjourned until Wednesday, September 17, 2008, at 9:30 a.m.

NOMINATIONS

Executive nominations received by the Senate:

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

BILL NELSON, OF FLORIDA, TO BE A REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE SIXTY-THIRD SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE UNITED NATIONS.

BOB CORKER, OF TENNESSEE, TO BE A REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE SIXTY-THIRD SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE UNITED NATIONS.

ANTHONY H. GIOIA, OF NEW YORK, TO BE A REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE SIXTY-THIRD SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE UNITED NATIONS.

KAREN ELLIOTT HOUSE, OF NEW JERSEY, TO BE AN ALTERNATE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE SIXTY-THIRD SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE UNITED NATIONS.